

Message Text

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46

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INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY FORT LAMY

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USMISSION USUN

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

UNCLAS DAKAR 3965

AFDROUGHT

EO 11652N/A

FSUBJ: VISIT TO SENEGAL, FERMINO J SPENCER, DIRECTOR AFR/CWR/
AID/W, AND DAN SHAUGHNESSY, FFP/AID/W AUGUST 25-31, 1973.

1. ON AUGUST 30 MESSRS SPENCER, SHAUGHNESSY, RDO MCADAMS AND GOLDING VISITED THE REGIONS OF SENEGAL ORIENTAL, FLEUVE, DIOURBEL, AND SINE-SALOUM VIA CHARTERED AZTEC, TO VIEW THE CURRENT CROP AND ANIMAL STATUS AT A TIME WHEN THERE HAS BEEN SOME RAIN BUT NOT YET ENOUGH TO BE CERTAIN THERE WILL BE A NORMAL HARVEST. ALL IN THE PARTY EXCEPT SHAUGHNESSY HAD PREVIOUSLY TRAVERSED PARTS OF OR THIS ENTIRE ROUTE. (DAKAR-LINGUERE-MATAM- ALONG THE SENEGAL RIVER TO BAKEL-EASTWARD TO TABACOUNDA-RAILROAD TO DAKAR.)

2. FLYING AT ALTITUDES VARYING FROM 500 TO 5000 FEET THE PARTY SAW AN IMPRESSIVE REAPPEARANCE OF VERDANT COVER AS CONTRASTED WITH JULY UNCLASSIFIED

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REPORTS. SCATTERED WATERHOLES AND SMALL NUMBERS OF CATTLE WERE OBSERVED GRAZING. FIELDS OF GRAIN, ESPECIALLY CLOSE TO VILLAGES, WERE ALSO SEEN IN TRADITIONAL MILLET AND SORGHUM AREAS.

3. WE MADE A STOP AT LINGUERE (DEPT OF DIOURBEL), A REGION KNOWN TO BE ONE OF THE HARDEST HIT BY THE DROUGHT. DECAUSE OF THE GOVERNOR'S VISIT, THE MARKETS WERE CLOSED. HOWEVER, WE TOURED THE TOWN ACCOMPANIED BY THE FORESTRY AND WATER RESOURCES RESIDENT TECHNICIAN AND LATER TALKED WITH THE CARETAKER OF LINGUERE'S WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM. WE OBSERVED A SELF HELP DEMONSTRATION SOIL CONSERVATION PLOT ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE CITY. THIS WINDBREAK OF TREES IN A FIELD OF 2 1/2 HECTARES WAS REPLANTED FROM A NURSERY AND HAD ATTAINED A HEIGHT OF 6 FEET AND 3-4 INCHES IN DIAMETER. MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENT OF THIS PROJECT WAS THAT IT WAS SELF HELP; THE PEOPLE DUG THE HOLES, PLANTED THE TREES, AND WATER THEM NOW. IT DRAMATIZED AN IMPORTANT BUT SOMETIMES OVERLOOKED ELEMENT OF THE WAY THE POPULOUS HAS RESPONDED TO THE DROUGHT. THIS WINDBREAK IS AN EXAMPLE OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION FOR LONGER TERM MEASURES IN RESPONSE TO THE DROUGHT. WE WERE INFORMED THAT

THE AREA NORMALLY IS EXCLUSIVELY DEVOTED TO ELEVAGE AND AND THAT THE PASTURAGE WAS COMING ALONG. THIS WAS SUPPORTED BY THE TOTAL ABSENCE OF ANY CULTIVATION AND THE VIVID PRESENCE AMONG THE KNEE HIGH GRASS SURROUNDING THE TOWN OF THE REMAINS (DRIED UP SKIN AND BONES) OF HUNDREDS OF DEAD CATTLE. THE SOLE SOURCE OF WATER FOR LINGUERE WITH A RESIDENT POPULATION OF 8000 AS AGAINST 40,000 FOR THE DEPARTMENT) IS A DEEP WELL OF 238 METERS. ITS WORKING LEVEL WAS 30 METERS. THE CARETAKER STATED THAT THEY HAD MAINTAINED AN ADEQUATE FLOW TO MEET BOTH HUMAN AND ANIMAL NEEDS THROUGHOUT THE DROUGHT; HOWEVER, THE ANIMALS DIED FOR LACK OF PASTURAGE.

4. THE SEOND LEG OF THE TRIP WAS TO THE SENEGAL RIVER. WE CAME TO IT AT MATAM ON THE MAURITANIAN BORDER AND FOLLOWED IT TO BAKEL, A SHORT DISTANCE FROM WHERE THE FRONTIERS OF MALI, SENEGAL, AND MAURITANIA CONVERGE. FROM THE DISTANCE THERE WAS EVIDENCE OF THE FIRST FLOODS IN THREE YEARS. EVIDENCE OF CULTIVATION OF TRADITIONAL CROPS IN THE NUMEROUS VILLAGES ALONG THE BANKS OF THE FLEUVE WAS OBSERVED. YET BECAUSE OF THE UNCONTROLLED NATURE OF THE RIVER (THE VILLAGERS PLANT ONCE THE FLOODS RECEDE) THE LANDSCAPE HAS A RATHER UNKEMPT APPEARANCE AS OPPOSED TO THE MORE RECTANGUALR CULTIVATION IN OTHER REGIONS OF SENEGAL. THERE WAS A GOOD DEAL OF CULTIVATION, BUT NOT AS MUCH AS ONE UNCLASSIFIED

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WOULD HOPE. THESE ARE SURELY AREAS THAT CAN BE SUBJECT TO RATIONAL USE-AND

WITH SOME SELF HELP- IN

ADVANCE OF THE GRAND DAM SCHEMES OF THE FUTURE. THIS IS POSSIBLE BECAUSE THE CHINESE (BOTH CHINAS) AHVE DONE IT ON BOTH THE MAURITANIA AND SENEGALESE BANK OF THE RIVER. THE PARTY OBSERVED THE SAME GREEN CARPET THAT IS MAURITANIA ON THE NORTH SIDE OF THE FLEUVE. OUR PILOT SAID THAT IT EXTENDED AT LEAST 50 MILES. THE SAME IMPROVEMENTS ARE DOUBTLESS POSSIBLE THERE AND IT IS POSSIBLE TO SAY THAT THE REMAINING ANIMALS ARE NOW FARING WELL.

5. AT TABACOUNDA (REGION DU SINE SALOUM) CAPITAL OF ONE

OF SENEGAL'S MAJOR PEANUT GROWING AREAS, WE INSPECTED PLOTS OF CORN AND SEVERAL MILLET VARIETIES. THE STALKS WERE TALL ("AS HIGH AS AN ELEPHANT'S EYE") AND BEGINNING TO FLOWER. SINCE THERE HAD BEEN RECENT HEAVY RAINS THIS AREA MIGHT HAVE ALREADY RECEIVED ENOUGH FOR THE SEASON; HOWEVER, FURTHER EXPERT ASSESSMENT WILL BE NEEDED. THE PARTY RETURNED TO DAKAR WITH THE OVERALL IMPRESSION THAT THE SITUATION LOOKS POSITIVE, THAT WHATEVER THE ANIMAL LOSSES THE ANIMALS ARE THRIVING NOW, AND THE CROPS OBSERVED WERE IN ABOUT THE SAME STAGE OF GROWTH AS SEEN BY OTHER ADO PERSONNEL 10 DAYS AGO.

6. IN DAKAR MESSRS SPENCER AND SHAUGHNESSY, ACCOMPANIED BY THE RDO, CALLED ON OUSMANE SECK, MINISTER OF PLANNING AND COOPERATION; ALFRED JAEGER, UN RESREP; AMBASSADOR GRENIER OF CANADA; AND THE REPRESENTATIVE OF CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES.

A) MINISTER SECK SAID THAT HE WAS ATTENDING THE PIC CONFERENCE AND AHD GREAT HOPES FOR ITS OUTCOME. ON THE SENEGAL DROUGHT SITUATION HE NOTED THAT WHILE CATTLE LOSSES HAD BEEN AS HIGH AS 25 PERCENT (600,000 HEAD) IT WAS FELT THAT "OPERATION SAUVETAGE) HAD BEEN ONE OF THE MORE SUCCESSFUL PHASES OF THEIR RELIEF PROGRAM. HE ADDED THAT WHEN THE RDO HAD FIRST DISKUSSED SUPPLEMENTAL FEEDING (PEANUT CAKE) WITH HIM IN EARLY MAY, HE HAD BEEN SKEPTICAL, NOW, AS A RESULT, CATTLE ARE FATTER THAN IN NORMAL TIMES AT THIS PERIOD OF THE YEAR, AND THE CONCLUSION IS THAT THEY MUST (UNDERSCORE) INITIATE AN ONGOING PROGRAM OF SUPPLEMENTAL FEEDING. HE ALSO INFORMED SPENCER THAT PRESIDENT SENGHOR INTENDED TO RAISE AND SUPPORT THE IDEA OF A HIGH LEVEL CONFERENCE OF UNCLASSIFIED

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INTERNATIONALLY RENOWNED SAVANTS ON PROBLEMS OF ARIDITY AND DESERT ENCROAHCMENT . HE ASKED SPENCER IF USAID STILL SUPPORTED THE IDEA OF SUCH A CONFERENCE. SPENCER REAFFIRMED AID'S SUPPORT.

B) THE UN RESREP JAEGER INFORMED SPENCER THAT UNDEP HAD SELECTED A FRENCH CONSULTANT FIRM TO CARRY OUT THE SYNTHESIS STUDY OF THE OMVS SENEGAL RIVER BASIN STUDIES AND OMVS HAD GIVERN THEIR CONCURRENCE. HE ALSO MENTIONED THAT THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE OMVS WAS NOT ATTENDING THE PIC MEETING. NOTWITHDTANDING, OMVS STILL WANTED THE UNDP TO FIELD A SECOND TEAM HEADED BY VU VAN THAI (SEE SEPTEL ASSESSMENT OF OMVS). HOGGART, THE FAO RANGE MANAGEMENT SEPCIALIST, ADVISED SPENCER THAT WHILE THE GRASS COVER IN SENEGAL MAY BE IMPRESSIVELY VERDANT, HIS SURVEY INDICATED THAT THESE GRASSES WERE PREDOMINANTLY ANNUALS AND NOT THE MORE NUTRITIOUS PERENIALLS. HE DESCRIBED THE AVAILABILITY OF SUFFIEIENT PASTURAGE FOR REMAINING CATTLE AS PRECARIOUS AT BEST.

C) AMBASSADOR GRENIER INFORMED SPENCER THAT THE CANADIAN DELEGATION TO THE PIC CONF WOULD BE LED BY CANADA'S AMBASSADOR TO THE ENTENTE COUNTRIES (MATHEU). OTTAWA WAS ALSO SENDING A REPRESENTATIVE

(POUILLAT SP?). HE SAID THAT CANADA WAS PREPARED TO
PARTICIPATE IN RECOVERY PROGRAMS OF SENEGAL, MAURITANIA,
AND MALI BOTH BILATERALLY AND THROUGH OMVS.
MORE COMMENTS BY SEPTTEL.
CLARK

UNCLASSIFIED

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